Public Speaking Competition

As educators it is our responsibility to help our students develop the confidence and skills to speak in real life situations where public speaking is required. Public speaking competence and confidence does not just happen: it starts with humble beginnings and slowly grows with confidence, experience and exposure to good role models of other public speakers.

We encourage schools to participate as Public Speaking has a significant place in the K-6 curriculum and this competition offers opportunity to enhance the learning experiences of all students.

**The School Competition**

This should begin in the classroom where children are given the opportunity to speak in front of their class. They may initially start on small time durations e.g. 30 seconds and then build up to the required time for their section. This should also include impromptu speeches. Topics can vary from `show and tell', specific topics or free choice. The aim of the competition is to improve the literacy skills, of all students. As students improve a class and or grade `Speak Off' can be held with the best speakers moving on to the next stage. It is up to each school as to the way they organise their respective school competitions but public speaking days and nights provide an excellent opportunity to show case your school and its talent. It also provides public speaking in your school with added prestige.

It is important that your school competition includes an Impromptu section, thereby reflecting the structure of the competition at the next level and also providing your adjudicators with a valuable tool for making their choice more confidently.

Only **ONE** speaker can represent your school in the Competition. This includes one student from Stage 1, Stage 2 and Stage 3. Please note Early Stage One students will not be participating in this level of the competition.

**Information For The Teacher**

The aim of the competition is to assist students to become more confident, clear and focused speakers in a public situation. This will provide them with an improved self esteem and assist them in the world beyond school. Public Speaking is an integral part of a literacy program and is therefore part of every classrooms curriculum.

A suitable beginning is to provide situations for students to speak in front of their class peers. News sessions, short narratives, expositions and reports are a starting point. All students are not necessarily natural public speakers and may not wish to pursue the ability at a higher level. All should be given the opportunity to explore and develop their skills at a class level, even if they choose not to enter the competition at a higher level.

At this level children will be able to demonstrate such skills as:
- research and organisation of information.
- creative and logical structuring of a speech to suit the audience and the topic.
- voice projection to suit a particular topic and audience.
- to convey an opinion convincingly - persuading an audience.

There are many starting points and the NSW DET documents can assist in planning these activities. There are various starting points which could include:
- Show and tell, picture taken from a box, etc.
- News, reporting on group projects, recounts.
- Dramatic plays, poetry, joke swapping, drama.
- Debating, discussions and expositions.
- Other impromptu speeches (e.g. drawn out of a hat).

A teacher’s primary role is to introduce speech-making to the class as soon as possible. It is important that students see Public Speaking as an integral part of the curriculum rather than a one off competition.
**Speeches**
These are divided into Prepared and Impromptu speeches. Prepared speeches are on a chosen topic. The length of the speech varies for each stage:
- Stage One – Years 1 and 2 - two minutes
- Stage 2- Years 3 and 4 - three minutes
- Stage 3- Years 5 and 6 - four minutes
The speaker needs to persuade the audience to believe their way of thought.

**Tips and Handy Hints**
There are several things to avoid and include when writing and presenting a prepared:
- Don’t introduce the speech or yourself the, chairperson has already done this for the speaker.
- Small palm cards can be used as prompts. Some students may wish to learn their speech. Speakers should try to avoid reading straight from the palm cards, as the speaker needs to engage the audience.
- Do not say thank you. The audience should thank you with applause.
- Avoid lists of facts about a particular topic. This leaves little room for personal insights.
- Speakers should project their voices.
- Humorous touches are usually well received by the audience and adjudicators.
- Avoid saying something is bad or stupid without giving good reasons for holding this opinion.
- Encourage students to look outside their local community and immediate lives and possibly give information from current events.

**Impromptu Speeches**
Impromptu Speeches are speeches where students have a very short preparatory time. Speakers are only given five minutes to prepare this speech. The starting and finishing time will be staggered, to make this part of the competition fair.
These speeches should be an integral part of the competition, as they show who has independently prepared their presentation. Impromptu speeches are given on a topic chosen by the adjudicators. Each stage will receive a different topic.

Each type of speech has equal marks. Students need to be taught how to quickly prepare in the five minutes allocated their impromptu speech for one minute, for stage 1 or one and a half minutes for stage 2 and 3 students.

Some ideas for completing speeches include:
- a mind web or map where ideas are written down as they come to mind on the subject being prepared
- the six question method is also useful. It involves asking WHEN, WHERE, WHY, WHAT, WHO, HOW? e.g. Fire ..... Who uses fire? Where is fire used? What is it used for? Why do we have to be careful when using fire? When is fire dangerous? How can we prevent accidents with fire?

Both these methods are useful and a combination of both is probably desirable. Students should have a prepared " lead in " and a "concluding" sentence so that they can begin and end confidently. It is important however, to avoid just listing points, but try to develop several of ideas into an opinion with a firm conclusion. Students will need to be taught how to elaborate key points.

**Information For the Student**
It is important for a student to choose a topic that suits their style, personality and which will be effective at all levels of the competition.

**Choosing a Topic**
The speech should develop a line of thought which leads to an opinion, not just a mini-lecture. For example if a student wants to talk about snakes it would not be one solely based on facts and figures, but one which develops an argument about their importance to the environment, why people are unnecessarily afraid of them and then conclude with a personal viewpoint.

**It is important that the speech for all stages states an opinion and attempts to persuade.**
It is essential that the speech is relevant to the audience. A speech on Australia's Economic Policy is not likely to grab the audiences’ attention at this age. The content should be the student’s choice ...something that interests or is important to the speaker. Students should avoid controversial topics which could upset or displease sectors of our community.

The **structure** should be clear, logical and sequential. A simple format could include the following guidelines:
Introduction .... clearly introducing the topic, setting the platform to develop and expand your argument.

Body - here the main points are expanded upon. This will include all the complications, conflict and resolution.

Conclusion ...the speech is rounded off, loose ends are tied up and an opinion stated about the topic.

Information For The Parent
How can you help?

- Assist your child in choosing a sensible topic. One that is original and fresh. It should also be familiar to the child.
- Help them develop it rather than writing it for them. Learning is through doing not having it done for you.
- Direct them to the sources where they can find their information. This could include library, interviews, family discussions, Internet, etc. This will help them construct a speech which is personal, meaningful and conversational.
- Listen to your child's speech (often) and assist with .... voice projection, sentence structure and timing. If possible, video children speaking and evaluate efforts towards improvement.
- Practice impromptu speeches at home, in the car or at any time available!
- Give plenty of encouragement and support.

Your children's teachers are also a valuable resource and by working together you will be able to help and guide the speaker in the right direction.

Public speaking should always be viewed as an enjoyable and productive exercise. It is a valuable component of the curriculum. Avoid putting undue pressure on children to perform, they should be encouraged to participate at a level at which they are comfortable and can gain the most from the experience.

A relaxed, natural, well prepared speaker will have confidence and will always be a winner.

Information For The Adjudicator
This is a difficult role many Teachers and Principals are asked to perform. In an attempt to make this task easier and to create a more consistent standard notes and ideas have been included. These will also assist in the adjudication process.

Adjudicators are not to be influenced by personal bias or past experiences. This is a competition for students 1 - 6. The guidelines are listed below:

- Prepared speeches and impromptu speeches hold equal weight. Final adjudication should be based on the strength of both not just one. Use the recommended marking sheets to assist here.
- A common format for judging is as follows:
  - Matter- 40% what is said, relevance to the topic, its suitability and originality, how clear the stated opinion is and is backed up.
  - Manner- 40% how it is said, eye contact, body language, pitch, tone, volume, clarity of diction, appropriate expression, etc.
  - Method- 20% how the subject matter is arranged, balance, structure, sequential development, etc.

Adjudicators should be prepared to offer feedback to the speakers, teachers and the competition committee.

Speech times vary with each age division. Adjudicators should take this into consideration when students fall way short or go well over the mark. It may be the deciding factor between two very close speakers.

Speech Times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1 – Years 1 and 2</th>
<th>Prepared Speech</th>
<th>Impromptu Speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2 – Years 3 and 4</td>
<td>3 minutes</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3 – Years 5 and 6</td>
<td>4 minutes</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Bell times:

- First bell is a warning bell 30 seconds before time
- Second bell is time, the student needs to sum up quickly
- Continuous bell at 30 seconds over

School impromptu topics should seek to provide a broad opportunity for the speakers to express a wide range of ideas. They should also avoid cliché topics for which they may be too well prepared.
Guide for Adjudicators
The following guide is presented to give adjudicators an outline of what to look for in these three areas. Each area is weighted as suggested and should be marked consistently. Impromptu speeches should be marked in a similar way. Prepared and impromptu speeches are given equal weight in the final judgement.

Matter 40 Marks
I. Has the speaker clearly said what the speech is about? What worthwhile arguments has the speaker put forward? Did the speaker go further than just saying their opinion e.g. provide back up points to reinforce their case.
2. Was the topic of the speech interesting?
3. Did the title of the speech reflect the content?

Manner 40 marks
Did the speaker influence the audience by...
1. Keeping eye contact, speaking clearly, changing the tone of his/her voice, speaking naturally.
2. Looking confident, using the appropriate facial expressions and hand gestures.
3. Avoiding slouching, fidgeting or over dramatisation.
4. Confidently use palm cards, as prompts, if required.
5. Giving an impression of sincerity.

Method 20 Marks
1. Did the speaker arrange his/her ideas in a logical order?
2. Did the speech begin and end well?
3. Was the speaker's topic relevant to the age and stage of his/her development?
4. Did the speaker run under or over time and to what extent?
5. Was the speaker's manner natural?
6. Did the speaker introduce him or herself, greet the audience or conclude with thank you? These are inappropriate.

TIMEFRAME FOR 2012

Term 2 – Classes complete Talking activities on a weekly basis. Students will also commence completing Impromptu Speeches in class activities towards the end of term.

During the last few weeks of Term 2 and Early Term 3 students will prepare a speech to be presented in class. The prepared speeches may be presented a number of times to the class audience, where areas of strengths are highlighted and areas for improvements are suggested. Impromptu speeches will also be practised and refined during this period.

Term 3 Week 3 Stage finals will be held in the library. Selected students will present a prepared and impromptu speech to the adjudicators. The marking scale will be as outlined above – Matter 40% Manner 40% and method 20%. There will be one winner for each stage chosen from this competition to proceed to the Final of the Community of Schools Public Speaking.

Term 3 Week 5 – Tuesday 14th August. Our representatives from each stage will go to Austinmer PS for the COS Final to compete. There will be a maximum of 9 children representing their schools eg. Helensburgh, Otford, Stanwell Park, Scarborough, Coledale, Austinmer, Thirroul, Bulli and Waniorra.

GOOD luck to everyone!